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BY THE HOUSE OF DELEGATES,
FEBRUARY 20, 1868.
Read and 500 copies ordered to be printed.
By order,
MILTON Y. KIDD,
Chief Clerk.

MINORITY REPORT

OF THE

COMMITTEE

TO EXAMINE INTO THE AFFAIRS OF THE

Tobacco Warehouses

ANNAPOLIS:
WM. THOMPSON OF R., PRINTER.
1868.

MINORITY REPORT

OF THE

COMMITTEE

ON KEEPING INTO THE ARREARS OF THE

Tobacco Manufacturers

ANNAPOLIS:
WM. THOMPSON, JR., PRINTER.

1868.

MINORITY REPORT.

To the Honorable, the Speaker

and Members of the Legislature:

The undersigned, a minority of the Special Committee to visit the State Tobacco Warehouses, respectfully ask leave to make this their separate report upon some of the subjects that have been referred to them by the House of Delegates.

Touching so much of the point as to the proposition to remove the State Tobacco Warehouses from their present sites to any other locations whatever, we ask that the House discharge the Committee from any further consideration of that subject, for the reason that both Houses of the Assembly have chosen to raise a joint committee to consider and report upon the policy of the proposition mentioned; and the joint committee having been invested with full powers over the whole subject, ought to supercede, for the time being, at least, any functions that were heretofore vested in the Special Committee of the House.

In so far as concerns the proposition to lease the said Warehouses, as an alternative arrangement to the system which now exists, we have the unhappiness to disagree with the majority of the Committee.

The tobacco interest of Maryland, its resources, needs and the former efforts for its protection, are too well known and appreciated by all gentlemen in public life to require us to argue this proposition in full detail.

Among those who are at all acquainted with that interest and its needs and necessities, two things are at least known:

1st. That the planting interest was strongly opposed to the removal of the inspections from the local points in the

country where they were formerly located, and that it has uniformly opposed any further change, except upon the basis of a restoration of the old system.

2d. That the lapse of time and a full investigation of the theory of the original change, as connected with the principles that underlie the immutable laws of trade, made it tolerably clear to the planting interest that our great city, "*Baltimore,*" being the centre and seat of exchange, of trade, and of all monetary operations for the productive industry of the State, was the proper point at which to transact all operations growing out of so weighty a matter as the sale of the whole tobacco crop of the State—that crop being, in reference to many of the counties (comprising a very considerable portion of the State.) what was always regarded as the most important of its staple products, for the reason that it was the single product upon which the supply of money or private revenue in those counties almost exclusively depended.

The settlemement that was made by the transfer of the inspections to the city of Baltimore, was finally, under these considerations, practically ratified by the planting interest. But it is equally well known that this acquiescence was based upon two well-known understandings: 1st. That when the State chose to assume the management of these inspections at one point, she should do it under her own responsibility, and through her proper officers, to the end that all should be equally cared for under the common protection that was to be afforded by the body politic; and 2d, that this interest was to be so managed, under the guardianship of the State, as to enure to the benefit of the planter, and not to that of particular persons, in the *sense of private profit, nor of the State itself, in the sense of revenue.*

We do not wish to deny that there are many defects in the present system of tobacco inspection, that will sooner or later demand and obtain a proper and fitting remedy, and that, too, at the suggestion of those who are best entitled to speak on the subject.

We think, for example, that the present law in reference to the payment of outage dues, might be advantageously and judiciously remedied, and that a general system of charges might be established, uniform in their character, and equally operative upon all who are subject to their provisions.

Another wise provision would be a law affixing some severe civil forfeiture upon those producers who should, upon proper guarantees, be shown guilty of false packing and of other frauds, which so greatly damage the interest of their

co-producers, and tend to injure the staple itself in the foreign markets.

These are questions, however, which affect another and future stage of this subject. It cannot, we think, be said that the lease of the warehouses is likely to repair these defects or to perfect the present system in any sense.

We therefore, while regretting to differ from our colleagues, feel ourselves under an obligation to strongly object to the leasing of the warehouses, until the assembly shall be entirely satisfied that the proposition shall meet the assent of those who are immediately concerned. And we feel justified in adding that the well known fact that three-fourths of the producing interest, and the factor and shipping interest, are opposed to the change, a circumstance that ought to have great weight with this General Assembly in dealing with a subject that is so delicate and so important as vitally affecting one of the highest, most productive and important interests of Maryland.

And we further respectfully recommend after this Committee shall be discharged from considering the subjects heretofore referred to, that the Standing Committee of the House on Inspections shall be charged with the duty of maturing a general statute on this whole subject, and in framing the same shall consider the matters mentioned in the report from your special committee.

All of the warehouses require repairing, particularly Nos. 2 and 3, and it is further recommended that a law be passed authorizing the inspectors at once to have the same done.

All of which is respectfully submitted,

T. E. WILLIAMS,

J. EDWIN COAD.

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